Project Managers' Advisory Group

MINUTES
June 20, 2011

Attending: **(* = by phone)**

Bob Giannuzzi	EPMO
Kathy Bromead	EPMO
Charles Richards	EPMO
Janet Stewart	EPMO
Jesus Lopez	EPMO
Valerie Maat*	EPMO
Gaye Mays*	EPMO
Alisa Cutler*	EPMO
Nathaniel Hill	SBOE
Raj Pavani	DOT
Cheryl Ritter*	DOT
Vicky Kumar*	OSC
Lucy Cornelius*	DPI
Ellen Zimmerman*	DHHS DPH
Gary Lapio*	DHHS DIRM
Karen Guy*	DHHS DIRM
Lynne Beck*	DMH/SS/SAS
Sarah Liles*	DMH/SS/SAS
Betty Cogswell*	DHHS/DHSR
Larry Sanders*	ESC
Jodi Bone*	ESC
Lloyd Slominsky*	Dept. of Corrections
John O'Shaughnessy*	ITS
Patsy Thames*	ITS
Chris Cline*	NCCCS
Colleen McCarthy*	SOS

Bob Giannuzzi welcomed everyone to the meeting. Nathaniel Hill and Raj Pavani were introduced as first time attendees.

Bob solicited and received approval of the May minutes.

Jesus Lopez announced that Nathaniel Hill and Raj Pavani recently passed their PMP exam and presently each of them a congratulatory letter from the SCIO, Jerry Fralick. Both were participants in the EPMO sponsored prep class, with Nathaniel being the first of the recently completed Cycle 12 students to reach the goal.

Jesus advised that the CSAT survey of the just completed PMP Exam Prep Class is in progress. Results will be available for the next PMAG meeting.

Bob passed on information from Vicky Kumar on a free seminar (4 PDUs!) to be held locally on June 23. Details were sent to PMAG distribution right after the meeting.

Bob reported the following upcoming events at NCPMI and PMI Community of Practice (CoP) webinars (since updated):

NCPMI Venue/CoP	Speaker	Date/Topic
General Membership		July 28 (6:00 PM) TBD
Public Sector LIG	Craig Zimmer	Aug 4 (5:45 PM) Program Management - back to the basics
PMO Committee		No meeting scheduled
Leadership Committee		No meeting scheduled
Information Systems Committee		No meeting scheduled
Free Webinar (LEAD CoP)	Connie Malamed	June 29 (2:00 PM) Your Brains on Graphics
Free Webinar (Government or IS CoP)	Ginger Levin	July 8 (noon) Program Management Complexity - A Competency Model
Free Webinar (Government CoP)	Christine Cheung	July 20 (noon) The Yin and Yang of Project Management Skills

Kathy Bromead briefly discussed the final State biennial budget. Several IT specific items need to be analyzed as to interpretation and impact. She will present a summary at the July PMAG meeting.

The progress of the EPMO work groups was discussed next.

- **SDLC** to address integration of alternate SDLCs (e.g., Agile) into the current process/workflow. Gaye Mays reported that the group has finalized the proposed Modular Workflow that combines the E&B and Implementation gates into one gate called Build & Implement. To date, favorable feedback has been received from the Statewide approvers. The group also drafted an "Agile Readiness Assessment" for use by the EPMO to determine at Initiation if the project is suitable and can succeed using agile methodology. This document is under review. Agile expert, Jose Solera, will be a guest at the 7/13 meeting where he will provide feedback and guidance on the workflow and assessment as well as share his agile wisdom. PMAG members using agile methodology at their agencies today are invited to share best practices, lessons learned, etc. with Gaye via e-mail. They are also welcome to share at the next PMAG meeting.

- **Agency Procurement** to develop a common (within agency) procurement process. Kathy advised that the updated documentation of the process is available the EPMO website. The group will next work on the RFP evaluation process.
- **Business Case** to develop guidelines and provide training on justifying projects based on cost/benefits analysis. Bob reported that the group is still focusing on training material that includes use of the new template.
- **PM Training** to create a project management course for new State PMs and/or part-time PMs. Jesus Lopez solicited volunteers to join him in this new effort to develop a program that will address the disparate needs of our diverse agency client base.

Alisa Cutler reported on Methodology Task Group activity. The new Communication Plan document has been finalized. Besides development of a template to itemize and describe project Business Functional Requirements, the group is planning to work on Disaster Recovery and Transition plan temples.

Charles Richards reported that 5 or 6 APM training sessions will be provided over the summer in preparation for the annual updates. PPM training will resume in August. Training schedules are available on the EPMO website as well as via the ITS Communications Hub.

Charles had no news to report on the PPM tool. As for performance since the server upgrade, no significant difference has been reported. John O'Shaughnessy commented that he has seen some improvement on all but the Status tab.

Janet Stewart advised that the next process release is slated for June 30 and the corresponding information will be available on the EPMO website.

Kathy announced that the EPMO is preparing its periodic (every two years) survey. This rendition will include questions on Agile development, collaboration across agencies, and SharePoint.

Lessons Learned from recently closed/canceled projects are summarized in the Appendix below.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, July 18, 2011 at 3:30
333 Six Forks Road Conference Room 5 or (919) 981-5581

https://its.ncgovconnect.com/r96139571/

APPENDIX

Lessons Learned Documentation

Exhibit A

DPI - CEDARS Data Warehouse

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Updated Procurement Plan	RFP process is unmanageable; required a year to award a contract even knowing from day 1 there was only one viable COTS product.
2. Staffing Plan	Some personnel assigned were lacking required skills for an LDS project
3. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	COTS directive was not necessarily best solution as the unique requirements of NC Wise baseline made most of the COTS functionality useless and excessive customization.
4. Requirements Mapping	Original mapping plan was not viable as source systems data structures were non-standard
5. Other	OBIEE directive was not best solution as it does not have XML export as EDEN requires

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Customer Expectations	4 of the 10 agency Hi Priority reports deliverables do not use LDS data function
2. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	Internal resources were not LDS skilled; Vendor did not assign A team
3. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Vendor did not assign A team
4. Change Management / Change Request	All CR approvals experienced excessive delays with OSBM
5. Development / Build	Vendor had to customize to meet EDEN standards & consume NCDPI data requirements
6. Testing (test execution, verification & validation, test scripts, test cases)	Data validation without QA resources created schedule delays
7. Requirements Verification & Validation	Source Systems contained many non-standard inconsistencies and the number grew from 23 to 30+.
8. Hosting Provider (setting up environments)	Months wasted on virtual environment testing that the vendor advised against.
9. Backup / DR Strategy	ITS does not have bare metal restore test capabilities

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Risk Management	Source System data extract delivery delays accounted for 95% of schedule slippage;
2. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	Project was under resourced from beginning to end. Its success is a tribute to the dedication of the remaining core team.
3. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Vendor did not provide A team
4. Hosting Provider	ITS day crew would configure ports as requested; night crew would come in a close the ports;
5. Production Readiness (software / hardware, process, personnel)	Many bugs found in COTS product functionality
6. Training (user, admin, etc)	Vendor did not provide professional trainers

General Comments:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. COTS	LDS could have been developed quicker and more efficient than COTS customization
2. Resources	Project was under resourced from beginning to end. Its success is a tribute to the dedication of the remaining core team.
3. PPM Tool budget vs. PPBES	Management wants them to match while they have very different process rules; You must revise PPBES to get through gate then revise back to keep agency budget analyst happy.

Exhibit B

ESC - ES Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA)

Initiation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Requirements Gathering and Mapping	The project plan defined the scope and deliverables. However, the project team was not always clear on the detailed business requirements. Including the business requirements as a deliverable and following a formal approval process for the business requirements would have provided team members with a reference point and allowed for a formal change management process.

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
6. Other	Project team member buy in to the project and support across divisions was difficult. The project documentation included an approved project charter and the team held regular team meetings. However, we need to make sure that all project participants are committed to the project and have the required knowledge and skills to complete their project tasks.

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
10. Updated Business Rules	During the project all business rule modifications should have been reviewed by the team and formally approved. This will ensure that all team members understand and

	support the business rules that have changed.
11. Change Management / Change Request	Utilize a semi-formal methodology rack small programming changes requested by the user. The user requested several small changes that had no impact on the project scope. However, the users change requests may have been minimized by using a semi-formal method (excel spreadsheet) to track the requests. Lack of tracking the user changes allowed the user to modify decisions several times which required extra programming efforts.

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
7. Other	The closeout of the project was delayed as the project team discussed and made adjusts to one of the reporting pieces.

Exhibit C

DHHS - N.C. Health Choice (aka SCHIP) Business Rules and Analysis

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Monthly Status Reporting	Create a Project Plan to use for tracking the project. (The PPM Tool is not intended to be the PM's tool to manage a project, rather to report on a project.)
2. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	The lesson learned is in the area of task assignment. When determining the proper resource to perform a task, look carefully at the individual'(s') skill set as well as the availability of the resource. There were a few times when an external resource(s) had to be assigned tasks planned for an internal resource(s) because the planned internal resource lacked the necessary skill set(s) or availability.

Exhibit D

DPI - eSIS: Transportation Information System (TIMS) Enhancement

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	Project plans that focus/align with PPM project phases are not effective for driving O&M specific projects. By throwing out the original project plan and developing a new clear/uncluttered plan that ignored phase relationships and focused on specific tasks/dependencies, the project team was able to better understand what was required to achieve and deliver on the project goals. Creating a different QA method (priority/business cycle based) allowed the project to come in on schedule. The standard method would have caused the project to exceed the schedule by 2 months. The above adjustments were absolutely essential as at the point the final PM inherited the project, the schedule was too short based on the amount of remaining work and the resources available.

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Sponsor Expectations	As the sponsor was new, extra care in communicating project status was essential to not spending additional time away from project activities, as this project was on a very short and fast paced schedule.

2. Managing Customer Expectations	Extra care in communicating project status was essential to not spending additional time away from project activities, as this project at the point the final PM engaged was on a very short and fast paced schedule.
3. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	Creating a new approach for training materials preparation, delivery and presentation allowed the training team to deliver on time, rather than in a delayed/catch-up fashion as has historically been the case.
4. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	Management support of the PM, giving empowerment to control resources (in most cases) was instrumental in the success of the project due to the volume of work coupled with the short schedule and fast paced nature of the project.
5. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Good vendor management/relationship is essential for success in these large upgrade projects.
6. Project Communication	Due to the short schedule and fast paced nature of the project, proactive communication and use of tools like gForge were instrumental to keeping different teams/members in sync. Email confirmation of verbal agreements should be increased to prevent occasional conflicts that can impact progress.
7. Development / Build	Use of post-YET data made the QA process more difficult, as some detail data needed to be created. In the future, the project plan/schedule needs to be aware of the business cyclical impacts from the perspective of data relative to project work.
8. Testing (test execution, verification & validation, test scripts, test cases)	The QA lead and the PM not having complete authority to drive (some) team members to complete tasks added additional risk. Business cycle/data (above) required additional setup work for test cases, extending QA activities.
9. Other	Getting as far in front of agency/ITS processes as possible prevented potential blockages to project progress.

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Sponsor Expectations	As the sponsor was new, extra care in communicating project status was essential to not spending additional time away from project activities, as this project had evolved to a very short and fast paced schedule.
2. Managing Customer Expectations	Extra care in communicating project status was essential to not spending additional time away from project activities, as this project had evolved to a very short and fast paced schedule. Lead-up webinar approach from the training team went a long way to educate customers as to changes/impacts and managing expectations.
3. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	Management's support of the PM's request to push off a series of staff moves ensured that the project would not be adversely affected during this very critical phase.
4. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Paying the premium to have vendor resources on call during the holiday period was key to the success of this phase, as there were key issues that required vendor engagement at the technical level to keep the project on track for meeting the service back online objectives.
5. Project Cost vs. Budget Cost	New hardware positively impacted the project hours during this phase for both internal and external resources. This lesson can be used to better plan future staff resource costs.
6. Production Readiness (software / hardware, process, personnel)	Engaging the service validation team (over and above QA) helped ensure high quality for when services were turned back on for the state-wide customer base, resulting in fewer service desk calls and higher customer satisfaction.
7. Training (user, admin, etc)	The training approach (above) resulted in better informed users and alignment with the project schedule such that training was not operating in catch-up mode.
8. Other	Management tended to let the PM run this show with little interference but was always prepared to add support when requested. This allowed the entire project team to stay focused without distraction (in the vast majority of cases) and helped the various sub-teams to merge as a single supportive team unit, which was foundational to the project's success.

Exhibit E

ITS - Infrastructure Study and Assessment (INSA) Report

Initiation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Business Case / Project Charter	The ability to bring in an IT Infrastructure Assessment Vendor was tied to the Governor's Cost Savings Initiatives driven by the estimated $3Billion shortfall. It was very positive to have Executive Support at that level at least initially to drive in-scope agency participation.
2. Procurement Plan (procurement strategy….build vs. buy)	Leveraged the Procurement Methods used in other States to shorten the Planned Procurement Cycle.

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	It was very positive to have Executive Support from the Governor's Office in the initial phases to promote in-scope agency participation in meeting the very aggressive schedule milestones.

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	It was very positive to have Executive Support from the Governor's Office in this phase to promote in-scope agency participation in meeting the very aggressive schedule milestones.
2. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	After awarding the contract competitively to a company with impressive IT Assessment expertise, we built a combined State and Vendor Project Team including in-scope Agency CIOs, OSBM staff, and other key stakeholders. ITS, the State's current IT Services Provider, built an internal team with staff from many different areas. Tip: Ensure all stakeholders are included in the process.
3. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	The Project Team applied an appropriate Vendor Deliverable Acceptance Process. Tip: Include Acceptance Criteria for the defined Deliverables in the Contract itself. The Program Manager had no leverage with the Vendor in negotiating the definition of Acceptance Criteria that would result in deliverables that meet all stakeholders' expectations.
4. Development / Build (of the IT Infrastructure Assessment and Recommendations)	After a successful kickoff, our joint team and in-scope agency participants met many times to fill out spreadsheets and describe our rates and services to the consulting experts. We were compared to public- and private-sector organizations of similar size and complexity. Tip: Have clear definitions, especially around the scope of what's included in all metrics. At one point, we had major disagreements with our vendor partner. Early results showed that our costs were well above others. But further analysis revealed that we weren't comparing apples to apples, e.g., we included significant one-time items, non-recurring unfunded mandates, and un-rated services within our rates. Tip: Stick with the program, even if you

	initially disagree with the numbers. In the end, we found the results helpful with our technology services and rates ranging from best practices to areas requiring improvement. Assessment of the IT Infrastructure Cost Management is a must. Lord Kelvin once said, "If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it."

Exhibit F

DPI - Consolidated Federal Data Collection – CFDC 100

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Staffing Plan	During the execution and build phase the Technology Services restructured the organization. The new organization structure implemented a new division known as the Enterprise Development Team. Project resources assigned to the project became a direct report to the EDT Team. This change caused conflict in priorities for the project resources assigned to develop and support the CFD 100 project. The Portfolio Manager, Resource Managers and the PMO realized that the organizational change imposed shift in the project scope and schedule became a moving target due to resource availability.
2. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	The timelines changed often because the EDT Team Manager set the priorities for the resources assigned Lack of standardize AGILE process impacted the project planning, schedule, and milestones. PMO must ensure that the development and communication of best practices for managing Agile projects are published.
3. ETS System Design Document	Develop standard technical design templates for Agile development. The technical documentation was waived for the project because there was no standard template available for AGILE development. The TASD is required therefore the EDT Team will develop a general TASD for all APEX application.
4. Requirements Mapping	Changes to the waterfall SDLC to AGILE SDLC during the planning phase impacted the delivery of the requirements. Unfortunately, the Functional System Analyst and the project team spent many hours documenting requirements and received customer sign-off. The requirements were grandfathered however, the standard requirements mapping process was eliminated from the scope of work. The AGILE development used prototyping as the standard best practices for requirements gathering which oftentimes conflicted with the signed requirements document.
5. Other	Establish SDL/Agile process and best practices early in the project. The SDLC strategy methodology changed from the Waterfall to the AGILE framework during the project. The AGILE framework was not clearly defined before it became the EDT best practice; therefore the PMO and EDT Manager had to determine the appropriate level of documents required for AGILE development. Many work hours and discussions on documentation consumed the project work. This AGILE process was relatively immature causing conflict during the software development stages of the project.

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	Milestones dates consistently changed during the project because the resources assigned to the EDT team had other critical priorities. This caused Product

	Delivery dates to fluctuate impacting our customer satisfaction. CFD 100 project was eventually de-scoped and the EDT team continue product development at a smaller scale.
2. Project Communication	The EDT Manager became the Product Manager and provided the Project Manager development status in a weekly meeting. Timelines and resource availability changed often and the PM was notified once a week during the EDT team meeting of the change. The PM was not allowed to meet with the development resources and dependent solely on the EDT manager to provide weekly status.